

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MILAN 01024 050737Z
ACTION EUR-12

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TO AMEMBASSY ROME
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AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL TRIESTE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL TURIN UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L MILAN 1024

ROME ALSO FOR MILATT
EO 11652: GDS-1 DECL JULY 1, 1988
TAGS: PINS PINT IT
SUBJECT: NEW CARABINIERE COMMANDER NORTHERN ITALY, ITALO
GIOVANNITTI

REF: MILAN 0753

1. MAJOR GENERAL ITALO GIOVANNITTI HAS SUCCEEDED GENERAL EDOARDO PALOMBI AS COMMANDER OF CARABINIERI FIRST DIVISION. PALOMBI HAS BEEN TRANSFERRED TO ROME AS DEPUTY COMMANDANT OF THE CARABINIERI AS REPORTED IN OUR 0753. I CALLED ON GIOVANNITTI JULY 3 TO GET ACQUAINTED.

2. GIOVANNITTI HAS SERVED SOME 44 YEARS IN THE CARABINIERI AND WHILE HE HAS HAD MANY ASSIGNMENTS, HE SIGNALLED OUT TEACHING OF THE LAW AS THE ONE TO DISCUSS. HE KNOWS SOME ENGLISH HAVING BEEN A POW IN INDIA FOR ABOUT 5 YEARS AND HAVING BEEN ASSIGNED TO THE NAPLES NATO COMMAND AT ITS INCEPTION. AS A MAJOR, HE WAS ESCORT OFFICER FOR THE CARABINIERI BAND VISITING THE UNITED STATES IN
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THE EARLY FIFTIES. A SOUTHERNER, GIOVANNITTI HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY SERVED IN MILAN ALTHOUGH HE HAD A TOUR MANY YEARS AGO IN NEARBY BRESCIA.

3. FRIENDLY AND TALKATIVE, GIOVANNITTI WAS ALSO READY TO TALK SUBSTANCE DURING A FIRST DISCUSSION. HE SAID HE WAS ENCOURAGED WITH THE NEW MINISTER OF INTERIOR, VIRGINIO ROGNONI WITH WHOM

HE HAD MET LAST WEEK. HE WAS SAYING THE RIGHT THINGS IN PRIVATE, ACCORDING TO GIOVANNITTI. HE WAS ALSO PLEASED WITH THE PERSON CHOSEN TO BE THE MINISTERS CAPO GABINETTO, A PREFECT OF WHOM HE SPOKE FAVORABLY. SO FAR NO ACTION HAD BEEN TAKEN TO CHOOSE A NEW CHIEF OF POLICE BUT GIOVANNITTI SAID THAT MILAN'S PREFECT AMARI WOULD BE EXCELLENT ALTHOUGH HE WOULD HAVE BEEN EVEN BETTER AS CAPO GABINETTO. (NOTE: ROGNONI MET AMARI IN MILAN ABOUT TEN DAYS AGO AND AMARI HAD SAID THAT HE WAS BEING CONSIDERED FOR EITHER OF THE TWO JOBS WHEN ZAMBERLETTI WAS FRONT RUNNER.) WITHOUT FURTHER EXPLAINING, GIOVANNITTI ADDED THAT THE INITIAL DECISIONS MADE BY ROGNONI WERE GOOD ONES.

4. THE TERRORIST SITUATION HAS NOT IMPROVED, IN GIOVANNITTI'S OPINION. THE CONVICTION OF CURCIO AND THE OTHER RED BRIGADE DEFENDANTS IN TURIN WAS GOOD NEWS PARTICULARLY THAT OF SOME OF THE MINOR FIGURES. ALTHOUGH GIOVANNATTI WOULD HAVE LIKED TO SEE LONGER JAIL TERMS, HE NOTED THAT THE PUNISHMENT WAS THE MAXIMUM PERMITTED BY LAW. THE DEFENSE LAWYERS AT ONCE ASKED THAT THE PRISONERS BE KEPT IN TURIN BUT THE JUDGE REFUSED AND THEY HAVE ALREADY BEEN DISPERSED TO MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISONS. IN GIOVANNITTI'S OPINION, THE TERRORIST UNDERGROUND IS NOW REGROUPING FOR NEW ACTION. FOR THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS, HE SAID, THE SUMMER MONTHS HAVE BEEN QUIET IN THE NORTH. BUT HE IS SURE THAT THE RED BRIGADES ARE BUSY PREPARING FOR NEW ATTACKS. THESE OPERATIONS REQUIRE CONFIDENTIAL

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EXTENSIVE PLANNING WHICH HE ASSUMES IS NOW GOING ON.

5. IT WAS IN DISCUSSING HIS OWN FAMILY THAT I THOUGHT I DETECTED SOME VERY STRONG EMOTION. ONE DAUGHTER IS MARRIED AND EXPECTING A CHILD. A SECOND IS APPROACHING GRADUATION FROM THE UNIVERSITY AND HIS WIFE IS REMAINING IN ROME FOR THIS PERIOD. HOWEVER, GIOVANNATTI SPOKE ABOUT THE LACK OF ETHICS AND PRINCIPLES AMONG TODAY'S YOUTH, THEIR VULNERABILITY TO DRUG ABUSE AND SUBVERSION, AS THEY DESERT CHURCH, FAMILY AND COUNTRY. THIS WAS ALL SAID WITH MUCH FEELING AND SEEMED TO REFER TO HIS OWN CHILDREN ALTHOUGH HE NEVER SAID SO. FINA

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